



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

August 18, 1998

S. 2360

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Authorization Act of
1998**

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
on July 29, 1998*

SUMMARY

S. 2360 would:

- authorize appropriations totaling approximately \$1.9 billion a year in 1999, 2000, and 2001 for various activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA);
- authorize NOAA to certify hydrographic products that satisfy federal standards, charge a fee for this service, and spend proceeds from such fees without further appropriation action;
- prohibit new fees or increases in fees for hydrographic products that are not authorized under current law; and
- authorize the appropriation of \$10 million for the Department of Commerce to carry out the provisions of the Fur Seal Act of 1966 and \$4 million in each of fiscal years 2000 and 2001 to provide grants to the cities of St. Paul and St. George, Alaska, for solid waste management facilities.

Assuming appropriation of the authorized amounts, CBO estimates that enacting S. 2360 would result in additional discretionary spending of \$5.56 billion over the 1999-2003 period for the navigation, atmospheric, satellite, ocean, and coastal programs provided by NOAA and for other programs. The legislation also would affect direct spending by authorizing NOAA to collect fees and spend the proceeds without appropriation; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply. CBO estimates that neither the offsetting collections nor the spending of fees would have a significant impact on the federal budget in any year. The bill

contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

ESTIMATED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The estimated budgetary impact of S. 2360 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By Fiscal Year, in Millions of Dollars					
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Spending Under Current Law						
Budget Authority ^a	1,179	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Outlays	1,558	1,143	169	100	20	0
Proposed Changes						
Authorization Level	0	1,884	1,858	1,909	0	0
Estimated Outlays	0	1,013	1,569	1,788	853	347
Spending Under S. 2360						
Authorization Level ^a	1,179	1,884	1,858	1,909	0	0
Estimated Outlays	1,558	2,156	1,738	1,888	873	347

a. The 1998 level is the amount appropriated for that year for the activities authorized in this bill.

BASIS OF ESTIMATE

S. 2360 would authorize appropriations totaling approximately \$1.9 billion a year in 1999, 2000, and 2001. For purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that S. 2360 will be enacted by the end of fiscal year 1998 and that all the authorized amounts for NOAA's navigation services and other programs would be appropriated for each fiscal year. Estimated outlays are based on historical spending patterns for the authorized programs.

Based on information from NOAA, CBO assumes that the agency would begin certifying hydrographic products and collecting fees in fiscal year 1999. CBO estimates that proceeds

from fees would be less than \$500,000 per year. NOAA would have the authority to spend fees without further appropriation action. Hence, there would be no net budgetary impact each year.

CBO estimates that there would be no budgetary impact from prohibiting new fees or increases in fees for hydrographic products that are not authorized under current law. The only existing fees for hydrographic products are charges for creating, publishing, and distributing nautical maps and charts. These fees yield offsetting receipts totaling about \$7 million a year. Such fees can be increased under current law, and S. 2360 would not affect that authority.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO CONSIDERATIONS

The Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act sets up pay-as-you-go procedures for legislation affecting direct spending or receipts. CBO estimates that enacting S. 2360 would affect direct spending but that there would be no significant impact in any year.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON STATE, LOCAL, AND TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS

S. 2360 contains no intergovernmental mandates as defined in UMRA and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. A small portion of the funds authorized to be appropriated by the bill would go to states as grants. For example, the national Ocean Service provides grants to states to develop and implement coastal zone management plans. Fiscal year 1998 funding for these grants was about \$50 million.

S. 2360 would also authorize the appropriation of \$10 million for the Department of Commerce to carry out the provisions of the Fur Seal Act of 1966. Those funds would be distributed to three tribal or local governments on the Pribilof Islands in Alaska. In addition, the bill would authorize the appropriation of \$8 million for grants to these same localities to pay for solid waste management facilities.

ESTIMATED IMPACT ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR

This bill would impose no new private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA.

PREVIOUS CBO ESTIMATE

On March 24, 1998, CBO transmitted an estimate of H.R. 3164, as ordered reported by the House Committee on Resources on March 11, 1998. H.R. 3164 would also authorize NOAA to certify hydrographic products, charge a fee for this service, and spend proceeds from such fees without further appropriation action. CBO's estimate of no significant impact in direct spending is the same for H.R. 3164 and S. 2310. Differences in the two estimates of discretionary costs reflect the different authorizations contained in the two bills.

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